

Sickle cell disease

Information for the public

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About this information

NICE quality standards help to improve key areas of health or social care so that people are offered the best care available.

This information explains the care and support described in [NICE quality standard 58](#) on sickle cell acute painful episode (a painful attack of sickle cell disease).

Sickle cell acute painful episode

The quality standard for sickle cell acute painful episode (a painful attack of sickle cell disease) is made up of 6 statements that describe high-quality care for people with painful sickle cell disease. These statements set out the quality of care you should receive.

1. People who go to hospital with a painful attack of sickle cell disease have their pain, blood pressure, blood oxygen levels, heart rate, breathing rate and temperature checked, and are given the right amount of pain relief within 30 minutes of arriving.
2. People with a painful attack of sickle cell disease have their pain relief checked every 30 minutes until they are comfortable and then at least every 4 hours until they leave hospital or their episode has ended.
3. People with a painful attack of sickle cell disease who are taking strong painkillers (strong opioids) are checked for possible side effects every hour for the first 6 hours and then at least every 4 hours until they leave hospital or their episode has ended.

4. People with a painful attack of sickle cell disease who have any breathing problems, chest pain or fever are assessed for a serious lung condition called acute chest syndrome.

5. People with a painful attack of sickle cell disease are cared for by healthcare professionals who can follow locally agreed procedures for managing the condition and can get support from specialist centres if needed.

6. People with a painful attack of sickle cell disease are given information before they leave hospital on how to get specialist support, how to get extra medication and how to manage any side effects of the treatment.

Your care

Your health and social care team should explain any treatment, care or support you should be offered so that you can decide together what is best for you. NICE has also produced advice and quality standards on [improving the experience of care for adults using the NHS](#) which you might like to read.

We also have more information on the NICE website about [using health and social care services](#).

More information on sickle cell acute painful episode

NICE has also produced guidance (advice) on [sickle cell acute painful episode](#) (a painful attack of sickle cell disease). The guidance was used to develop this quality standard.

Sources of advice and support for people with painful sickle cell disease, their families and carers

- Sickle Cell Society, 020 8961 7795
www.sicklecellsociety.org

You can also go to [NHS Choices](#) for more information about health and social care.

NICE is not responsible for the quality or accuracy of any information or advice provided by these organisations.

A number of organisations who share NICE's commitment to improving quality in this area formally support this quality standard. They may also be able to provide advice and support. For a list of these organisations see the [sickle cell acute painful episode quality standard](#) on the NICE website.

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Accreditation

